



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913  
PH (517) 373.3447 | FAX (517) 373.5849  
[www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/birkholz/](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/birkholz/)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
3-14

Contact: Amanda Price  
(517) 373-3447

## **Birkholz Introduces Aquifer Protection Bill**

*Senator wants to provide for key new water conservation measures*

**Tuesday, March 11, 2003-** Senator Patricia Birkholz, R-Saugatuck Township, today introduced Senate Bill 289, a bill to protect the groundwater of Michigan and allow for continued wise access to this resource for the citizens of the state.

Senate Bill 289 would require the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to compile a mapping of certain critical aquifers in Michigan, and create a management program for certain large volume withdrawals in those areas. Only those who withdraw large volumes of water in a critical area would have to obtain a certificate of approval. Other users would continue their use without review by the state. This legislation is based largely on the recommendations of the Great Lakes Conservation Task Force

“The Great Lakes region is blessed with the largest system of freshwater on the earth. Michigan alone has 3,250 miles of shoreline. Undoubtedly, our water is important to the citizens of the State of Michigan. Senate Bill 289, which deals with “Critical Aquifer Protection”, is a pro-active approach that provides clear and enforceable standards, based on sound science. I believe we can protect our natural resources while allowing economic growth. And, I believe we can sustain industry, agriculture and progress and offer resource protection standards at the same time.”

“People want to know that when they turn on the faucet to get a drink of water, they will have safe water, when they bathe, they want clean water,” Birkholz said during an opening statement of the Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee.

Under this legislation, the program will be jointly administered by the DEQ and the Department of Agriculture. Senator Birkholz will be conducting committee meetings on SB 289 in the Committee on Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs.